APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY
2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Volunteer Maryland   **Application ID:** 13AC145151

Program Name: Volunteer Maryland

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

(+) The applicant describes the problem to be addressed by the proposed AmeriCorps project: nonprofit agencies rely on volunteers but do not have the resources or expertise to implement effective volunteer recruitment, retention and management programs.

(+) The applicant describes the target community as nonprofit organizations in Maryland that address needs such as homelessness, educational attainment and hunger within their communities.

(+) The applicant explains why they selected this population to serve; for example, the applicant states that by providing a short-term infusion of resources and energy into building volunteer management capacity, they will develop the sustainability and efficiency of a large number of programs around the state.

(+) The applicant describes in great detail the activities, roles and responsibilities for its AmeriCorps members in Volunteer Maryland (VM), which includes the program's full-time focus on volunteer generation and volunteer program development.

(+) The applicant's "Multiplier Model" enables partner organizations to provide more services, better volunteer programs and increased organizational capacity than they would have without the AmeriCorps members in the program.

(+) The applicant requests 96 full-time slots over the three-year program period (32/year). Thirty/year will serve as volunteer coordinators; two/year will serve as mentors and guides for AmeriCorps members.

(+) The applicant uses the best practices outlined by the Association for Volunteer Administration. These practices correlate with the Corporation for National and Community Service's list of effective volunteer management practices and are consistent with the principles taught by industry leaders.

(+) Based on these evidence-informed approaches, the applicant identifies specific performance measure targets.

These targets include, over the next three years, 96 AmeriCorps members at 90 sites will mobilize 9,720 volunteers who will provide 97,200 hours of service. In addition, at least 66 sites will implement three or more effective volunteer management practices and will report that capacity-building activities helped to make them more efficient.

(+) The applicant identifies measurement strategies of pre- and post-evaluation to determine the impact on organizational ability to effectively utilize volunteers. This will measure organizational knowledge of effective volunteer management strategies and organizational efficiency. These measures are directly aligned with stated goals of increasing effective recruitment and support of volunteers in nonprofit and government agencies.

(-) The applicant does not provide documentation of the need for volunteer management support among nonprofit organizations in the target service area of the state of Maryland. The applicant cites reports documenting this need nationally but does not present data, surveys or reports showing the extent of need among Maryland nonprofit organizations.

(-) The applicant does not address whether proposed nonprofit partners will serve communities that are economically disadvantaged.